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The Rev. J. H. Todd, D. D., read a paper on the name said to have been given to St. Patrick, when a captive in Ireland, by his heathen masters; a name which the biographers of the saint have endeavoured to interpret, without any very satisfactory result.

It appears that the father and mother of St. Patrick had taken him and his sisters to visit their relations in Armorica. Whilst they were there, a party of British (that is, as appears from the story, North British) made an inroad upon the country, slew the parents of St. Patrick, and carried him and his sisters away with them as captives. The pirates landed in the north of Ireland, where they sold Patrick as a slave to Milcho, or Miliuc, a chieftain of Dalaradia,* by whom we are told he was named *Cothraighe*.

This name has greatly puzzled the authors of the lives of St. Patrick, who all derive it from the Irish *ceathair*, which is the Latin *quatuor*; and to explain it on the assumption of this etymology, they tell us that Miliuc was one of four, who had jointly purchased St. Patrick, and that the name was given him because he had become the servant of *four* masters. Thus Fiech, Bishop of Sletty, in the ancient metrical life of St. Patrick which stands first in Colgan's collection, says,—

“batar ille Cothraighe
Ceathar crebbe dia rognab.”

Which Colgan translates thus:—

“Ideo vocatus Cothraighe, quia quatuor familiis inserviebat.”

It will be observed, however, that this etymology does not explain the occurrence of the *g* in the name *Cothraighe*: for there is no *g* in *ceathair*, or *quatuor*.

This difficulty seems to have been felt by the author of the prose Life, (given by Colgan as his *Vita secunda*)—who latinizes the name *Quadriga*; and explains it thus: “Ipse in regione Dalaradiæ devectus, a quatuor emptus est; ex

* Vit. Trip. I., c. 16., Jocel. c. 13.

quibus unus Miliuc erat; ubi fideliter servivit. Illic *Quadrigæ* nomen accepit, quia equorum quatuor domibus servivit."—cap. 12.

It appears from Colgan's note on this passage, that some of the MSS. he used read *Quotirche*, and *Cotirche*, which he explains as a compound of *ceathair*, four, and *tigh*, a house, telling us that the true latinized form of the name is *Quadrigitius*, not *Quadriga*, which he pronounces to be corrupt; and this may have been also the meaning of the author of the Tripartite Life, when he tells us that *Cothraige* means four families.

It is evident, however, that the author of the second life supposed the name to have contained an element which signified *horses*, for he says "nomen accepit, quia *equorum* quatuor domibus servivit." It is probable, therefore, that this ancient writer explained the *g*, by supposing the name *Cothraighe* to be a compound of *ceathair*, four, and *each*, a horse; and for "*equorum quatuor domibus*," perhaps, we ought to read, "*equorum quatuor dominis*."*

Colgan's explanation is wholly inadmissible; for it introduces a *t* which does not occur in the original form of the name as given by St. Fiech. To justify Colgan's etymology the name ought to be *Cothratighe*, not *Cothraighe*.

The other lives throw no additional light on the subject, although all agree in deriving the name from *ceathair*, four,

* The third Life says (c. 13), "Tunc datum est ei illud nomen, quod dicitur *Coithrige*; eo quod quatuor Dominis serviebat." The fourth Life, attributed by Colgan to St. Eleran, has the same story, but makes the four to be *brothers*: "Ductus ergo in Hiberniam, in septentrionali plagâ, venditus quatuor fratribus quapropter eum *Quadrigam* appellarunt."—(c. 15.) And the Tripartite Life gives the story thus:—"Erant autem et alii tres, qui cum Milchone societatis commercio Patricium cœmerunt et hinc debuit quatuor inservire dominis: unde *Cothraige*, quod quatuor familias denotat, appellatus est, quia quatuor familiis debebat inservire."—(Part i. c. 17.) Probus and Jocelin make no mention of the name. And it is evident that none of the biographers, except the author of the second Life, make any attempt to explain the *g*.

and explain this derivation by supposing Patrick to have been purchased by four masters—a fact which has probably no foundation except this conjectural etymology.

The derivation from *ceathair*, therefore, is evidently unsatisfactory, as leaving unexplained an essential element of the word; and the meaning of the name said to have been given to St. Patrick by his Irish masters is still open to inquiry.

Dr. Todd, therefore, was desirous of offering a conjectural explanation of the difficulty to the consideration of those members of the Academy who are interested in philological studies. He was disposed to think that the name *Cothraighe* was nothing more than a Gaelic corruption of the Latin name *Patricius*. This opinion he supported by the consideration that the Irish or Gaelic dialect of the Celtic has no native words beginning with *p*; a remark made long ago by Edw. Llwyd (*Comparative Etymology*, p. 20); and that words, which in Latin or in Welsh begin with *p*, are in Irish, almost without exception, written with *c*. This law being admitted, it follows at once that *Patric* would, by an Irish Celt, be corrupted into *Catric*, and that by aspirating or softening the *t* and final *c*, according to another well-known law of the language, would become *Cathrighe*, or *Cothraighe*, the exact name as given by St. Fiech, who is the most ancient authority for it, and who flourished in the latter part of the sixth century.

In confirmation of the assertion that the use of *c* in words where other dialects had *p*, was a law of the Irish language, Dr. Todd adduced the following instances:—

WELSH.		IRISH.
<i>Pa, pe, pia.</i>	What (quis, quæ, quod).	<i>Cia, ce, cid.</i>
<i>Petuar.</i>	Four (quatuor).	<i>Ceathar.</i>
<i>Pymp.</i>	Five (quinque).	<i>Cuig.</i>
<i>Penn.</i>	A head.	<i>Cenn, or Ceann.</i>
<i>Plant,</i>	Offspring, children.	<i>Cland, or Clann.</i>
<i>Pren.</i>	A tree.	<i>Crann.</i>
<i>Mab.</i>	A son.	<i>Mac.</i>

WELSH.		IRISH.
<i>Prenu.</i>	To buy, purchase.	<i>Cren</i> , or <i>Crean</i> .
<i>Paup.</i>	Any, every one.	<i>Cach.</i>
<i>Pask.</i>	<i>Pascha</i> , Easter.	<i>Casg.</i>
<i>Pair.</i>	A cauldron.	<i>Coire.</i>
<i>Prye.</i>	A worm.	<i>Crumh.</i>
<i>Prydd.</i>	Clay.	<i>Criath.</i>

And so also *Pentecost*, or Whitsuntide, is in the Irish dialect, *Cincis*, (in Cornish, *pencos*), where it will be observed that the initial *p* is made *c*, whilst the *c* of the syllable *cost* remains. It is remarkable that the tendency to change the *p* sound into *k* or hard *c* exists also in the Ionic dialect of Greek; thus πῶς is *Ionice* κῶς; ποσος, *Ion.* κοσος.

It is true that we find the name of Patrick written with a *P* in very ancient Irish authorities. But this does not in any way contradict the conjecture now thrown out that his Dalaradian masters may have corrupted *P* into *C*. The fact that *p* and *c* are interchanged in the Welsh and Irish dialects of the Celtic, is undeniable. The fact that Patrick was called Cotrick by Miluic is recorded by the highest historical authority. Therefore it seems very easy and natural to infer that this change is only another example of an undoubted law of the language. The same people who changed the foreign word *Pasch* into *Cask* or *Casg*, may, without difficulty, be supposed to have changed the foreign word *Patrick*, into *Ca-trick* or *Cotrick*. The fact that *p* is sometimes a corruption of *c*, or, in other words, that the *c* or *k* sound is frequently in the original or primitive form of a word, and *p*, in the derived or corrupted form, is nothing to the purpose,—because there are other and as numerous instances in which the *p* is primitive. Thus, the Irish *cuig*, five, and *ceathair*, four, compared with the Latin, *quinque*, *quatuor*, seem more primitive than the Welsh *pyp*, *petuar*: and the Greek πέντε is, also, most probably, a less primitive form than *quinque*, as ἑξασαρες is less primitive than *quatuor*. But, on the other hand, the Irish

Casg, Easter, is a manifest corruption of *Pascha*, as *Cincis* Whitsuntide, is of *Pentecost*,—and these are examples of foreign names in which the *p* is made *c*, in exact analogy with the conjecture, which Dr. Todd submitted to the judgment of the Academy, that *Cothraighe* was no more than a Celtic form of the Latin name *Patricius*.

Dr. Todd remarked further, that this conjecture, if admitted to be true, would supply a very remarkable confirmation of the substantial truth of the traditions incorporated into the lives of St. Patrick, and ought to render us very cautious how we reject the historical facts recorded in those lives, without very strong grounds. The fact that Patrick was called Catrick by his heathen masters, seemed a difficulty even to Fiech and the other ancient biographers of the saint. To meet the difficulty they were driven to fanciful derivations, and the circumstance of his having been purchased by *four* masters was invented to justify that derivation. But now, the comparative philology of the Celtic dialects enables us to explain a word which to the most ancient writers whose works have been preserved to us, seemed inexplicable. It is beyond a doubt that the name of *Cothraighe* did exist, and was given to St. Patrick—and it is infinitely more probable that the story of his four masters was invented to explain the name of *Cothraighe*, than that the name of *Cothraighe* was invented to explain the story of his having had four masters.

In conclusion, Dr. Todd stated that there was considerable difficulty in the translation of the passage already quoted from the Hymn of St. Fiech, which is the most ancient authority for this name. All the old biographers understand it as asserting that Patrick was called Cothraige because he was slave to four masters: and Colgan translates it accordingly. The difficulty is, that *bacap* is the third person plural, and that *ile* appears to be the well-known word which signifies *many*, so that the meaning would seem to be,—

"There were many Cothragians

With four tribes of whom he was in slavery."

And Dr. O'Donovan, who suggests this version, states that there is a barony called Cathraighe, now Carey, in the district where Milcho resided. Dr. O'Connor takes *ile* for *cile*, and translates (but how the translation is to be justified does not appear), "*Fuit ei nomen adoptivum aliud Cothrag.*" Dr. Heinrich Leo, in his commentary and translation of the Hymn of St. Fiech, has proposed an entirely new translation of the passage. He would render the words *batar ile cothpaige*, "*Magni erant greges.*" And he remarks "*Locus hic intellectu facillimus ab interpretibus maxime difficilis redditus. Opinabantur enim, quia vocem Cothraighe insolito more scriptam videbant, et quia in sequentibus narratur Patricium quatuor prædiorum pecora pavisse, Cothraige esse novum nomen S. Patricio ab Hibernis inditum, quatuor familiarum servum significans.*" But it is beyond all doubt that the story of Patrick being slave to four masters was founded on the explanation given of the name *Cothraighe*, not the name *Cothraighe* on the story, as Dr. Leo supposes. He assumes also that *Cothraighe* was an *unusual mode* of writing *ceatpaige*, or *caopaiḡe*, cattle or sheep.* A very unusual mode indeed—for the *small* sounding diphthongs *ea*, or *ao*, never could be represented by *o* or *a*. And this is also a difficulty in the common derivation from *Ceathair*, four, for in all the authorities the name is written with the broad vowel *a* or *o*, *Cothraighe*, *Cotirche*, *Quadrīga*, &c.

It is, however, doubtless a great objection to all these interpretations, that the ancient biographers of St. Patrick unanimously understand the Hymn of St. Fiech as having asserted that *Cothraighe* was a name given to St. Patrick by

* Zeuss translates the words *batar ile cathraige*, "*fuereunt multæ civitates,*" taking *cathraige* as the plural of *cathair*, a city.—*Gram. Celt.* p. 943.

his heathen masters; and their authority is supported by another of no less weight.* The ancient gloss on this passage in the Book of Hymns is as follows:—

“i. po lenartap intaimm ap cothraighe i. cetharaighe i. apinmi do gnoich tpiuibur .iiii.”

“i. e. the name Cothraighe followed him: i. e. quasi Cetharaighe, i. e. because he served four tribes.”

Here it will be seen that this very ancient authority agrees with the lives, in considering Cothraighe a name given to Patrick; and paraphrases batap ile Cothraighe, “the name of Cothraighe followed him.” But how this explanation is justified by the Irish, Dr. Todd professed himself unable to explain. He could only conjecture that, possibly, the words ought to be divided thus:—

bat apile Cothraighe;
“Fuit aliud (nomen) Cothraighe;”

bat being the old form, which is now bā, the third pers. sing. pret. of the substantive verb, and apile for apile another. But the whole question being one of great uncertainty and difficulty, Dr. Todd wished to be understood as merely throwing out these suggestions for the consideration of Irish scholars.

* The same interpretation of the name is also given in the Preface to the Hymn of St. Sechnall, *Audite omnes*, as transcribed into the *Leabhar Breac* (see the *Liber Hymnorum*, edited by Dr. Todd for the Irish Archæological and Celtic Society, p. 27). This is an authority which may not be of much greater antiquity than the thirteenth century: and is therefore not superior to that of the Lives.